



The Ramble

570 of 11th May 2026



Monday 18th May
Monday 25th May

No Ramble as at SVR Diesel Gala
[571] Spring Bank Holiday

Monday 1st June
Monday 8th June
Monday 15th June
Wednesday 24th June
Monday 29th June

[572]
Holiday
Holiday [North Norfolk Diesel and Beer Event]
[573]
[574]

Monday 6th July
Monday 13th July
Monday 20th July
Monday 27th July

[575]
[576]
Holiday [Tomorrowland]
Holiday [Tomorrowland]

Monday 5th August
Monday 10th August
Monday 17th August
Monday 24th August
Monday 31st August

[577]
[578]
Holiday
Holiday
Holiday

Wednesday 9th September
Monday 14th September
Monday 21st September
Monday 27th September

[579]
[580]
Holiday [Innotrans]
Holiday

A Bad Hair Day

Having a bad day? Not as bad as this one!



Alan Chapman

Alan Chapman's Funeral will be held at Breakspear Crematorium on Friday 29th May 2026 at 11:15 am.

Breakspear Crematorium
West Chapel
Breakspear Road
Ruislip
HA4 7SJ

Served by Number 331 <https://tfl.gov.uk/bus/route/331>

Every 20 minutes and it is 10 minutes to the Crematorium.

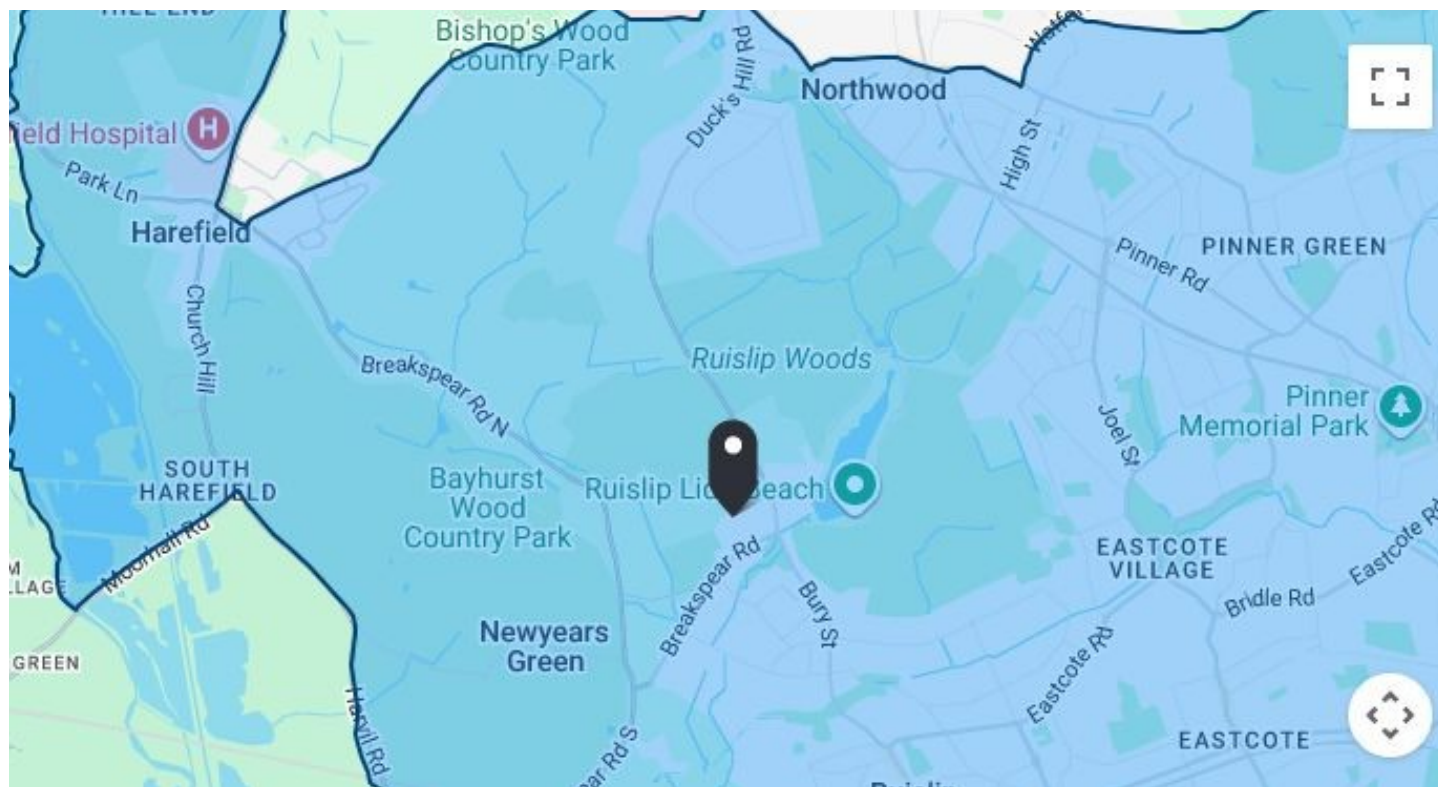
Ruislip Station
Breakspear Crematorium
Northwood Station
Denham Station
Belmont Road [Uxbridge Station]

Served by H13 to the end of Breakspear Road <https://tfl.gov.uk/bus/route/h13>

Every 20 minutes and it is 6 minutes to the Crematorium from Ruislip Station.

St Vincent's Nursing Home
Northwood Hills Station
Pinner Station
Ruislip Manor Station
Ruislip Station
Breakspear Road
Ruislip Lido

Do Note - That for those out of the area, Breakspear Crematorium is in the Emissions Charging zone. You need to check if your car needs to pay.



The Ruislip Lido Railway is running on Friday 29th May.

<https://www.ruislipidorailway.org/timetable>

Severn Valley Diesel Gala

I travel down to Birmingham on Wednesday 13th May. Aim to do the new bit of tram track and go to the Great Western in Wolverhampton for tea. Then call in at The Jewellers Arms for final refreshments.

Thursday 14th - Severn Valley Diesel Gala

Friday 15th - Severn Valley Diesel Gala

Saturday 16th - Severn Valley Diesel Gala but aim to be at the top end of line away from the crowds.

Sunday 17th - Day 1 of Heart of England Rover. 09:30 Birmingham NS to Cheltenham for train forward to Dean Forest for shunter event.

Monday 18th - London on a 68

Tuesday 19th - Day 2 of Heart of England Rover

Wednesday 20th - Day 3 of Heart of England Rover

Thursday 21st - Home

If you are about always introduce yourself. I like to meet people who get the Ramble.

This was the maestro at work at the Gala last year!



Paul Cragg - Gonk

On Sunday 3rd May, Paul Cragg, who was also known as Gonk, passed away after a two year battle with cancer. Pete Turtle remembers Paul reporting his illness, way back in February 2024, and looking back on his journey reports it didn't stop Gonk enjoying his hobby.

This photograph basically sums up Gonk. Photo courtesy of Yuppie.



Martin Brown wrote on Facebook

Today I (& we) lost a fellow crank and a friend, first time i have shed a tear in ages. He was not a close friend but someone who was and always has been infectiously, warm, kind, funny if not sometimes stupid, happy to share and always laughing. I think this photo says it all about "Gonk" (please don't go on about the traction it simply does not matter), he enjoyed, like us all, his hobby to the full and to the very end, with a a cheeky smile and always with a beer! RIP Gonk you will be missed.



RAILWAY TO LIBERTY

23 & 24 MEI 2026



Ontmoet de échte Herr Flick
en Lieutenant Grüber en
Helga uit 'Allo 'Allo op 24 mei!



Herdenk de Bevrijding en bezoek dit enige militair
spoorwegevenement in België.

Rij mee met stoomtreinen uit de oorlogstijd, bezoek een
militair kamp, ontmoet figuren uit die tijd.

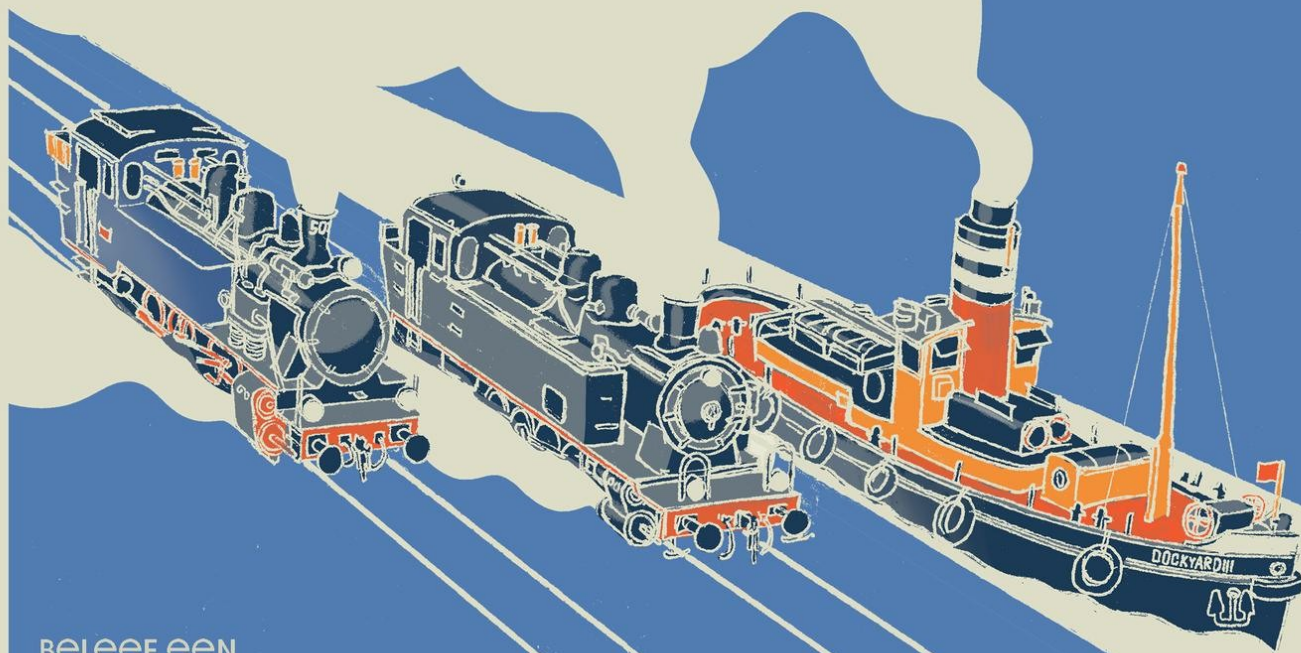


Meer info & reservatie op www.stoomtreinmaldegem.be

Dit event wordt georganiseerd door vzw CODUS Eeklo samen met Stoomtrein Maldegem-Eeklo.

STOOMTREIN DENDERMONDE-PUURS EN PROVINCIE OOST-VLAANDEREN PRESENTÉREN:

SCHELDELAND IN STOOM 4 & 5 JULI 2026



BELEEF EEN
UNIEKE STOOMDRIEHOEK &
BEZOEK ERFGOEDSITES DOORHEEN
HET NATIONAAL PARK SCHELDEVALLEI

OPEN VAN 10 TOT 19 UUR - VIER STOOMLOCOMOTIEVEN IN ACTIE TUSSEN BAAIRODE-NOORD EN
PUURS - STOOMBOOT 'DOCKYARD III' OP DE SCHELDE - MODELREINEXPO - FOTOTENTOONSTELLING
40 JAAR MUSEUMEXPLOITATIE LIJN 52 - STOOMMACHINES - OLDTIMERS - BEZOEK
SCHEEPSWĒRVEN BAAIRODE EN GANSAKKERMOLEN IN SINT-AMANDS PER PENDELBUS

INFO & TICKETS:



Dendermonde
STOOMTREIN
Puurs

provincie
Oost-Vlaanderen



puurs-sint-amands

Buggenhout
bosgemeente

TOERISME
VLAANDEREN

NATIONAAL PARK
scheldevallei

DMD
STAD DENDERMONDE

toerisme
KLEIN BRABANT
SCHELDELAND

Kampioen
Landschap

CHEMIN DE FER À VAPEUR DES 3 VALLÉES

Festival Photos

Le 17 juillet 2026



INFOS & RÉSERVATIONS



CFV3V



+32 (0)60 31 24 40



www.cfv3v.eu



Chée. de Givet, 49
5660 Mariembourg



PROVINCE
de NAMUR



Fondation
Roi Baudouin



VISIT
Wallonia
be

<https://cfv3v.eu/evenements/festival-photos/>

People did not support the Diesel Gala so the CFV3V do something more profitable.

For The Diary 2026

If you know of an event, let me know and I will put it here.

Severn Valley Diesel Gala - Thursday 14th May to Sunday 17th May

If you have not been to a UK Diesel Gala this is usually one of the best to go to. I have started to make a week's holiday of it. Got my hotel booked in Birmingham.

Steam Train Maldegem-Eeklo - Railway to Liberty Sat 23rd - Sun 24th May

<https://stoomtreinmaldegem.be/nl/evenementen-2026/23-24-mei-2026-railway-to-liberty/>

On the weekend of May 23 and 24, the 'Railway to Liberty' event will be held at the Steam Train Maldegem- Eeklo. The event centres on the remembrance of the Second World War and the liberation. With special rides on the 'Battle Train', entirely in the style of the Second World War, visitors can visit a reconstructed World War II army camp. The train itself, together with re-enactors in historical army uniforms, participates in a re-enactment of the Second World War. The spectacle is given extra flair by three famous actors from the British TV series 'Allo Allo!': Herr Flick, Lieutenant Gruber, and Helga will be there in person!

Spring Bank Holiday is on Monday 25th May

The Braunschweig and Hannover Explorer - Sat 13th June to Mon 15th June

This has been organised by Ramble reader Paul Griffin for the Branch Line Society [BLS]. This three day series of tours will visit the extensive Verkehrsbetriebe Peine-Salzgitter (VPS) network, goods lines in the Braunschweig area, the Hannover freight ring, two docks systems in Hannover, a heritage railway, a peat railway and possibly a tram tour of Braunschweig.

Details on the tour are on the BLS website on their fixtures page. There is not a direct link to the web page advertising the tour, you have to go to the Branch Line Societies Fixtures page and scroll down to find.

<https://www.branchline.uk/current-fixtures.php>

Stoomtrein Dendermonde-Puurs - July 4th & 5th

On Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th July the SDP usually kicks off their tourist season with Scheldeland in Steam.

Chemin de Fer Touristique de la Vallée de L'Aa - Le Festivallée 4th & 5th July

The festival at the Chemin de Fer Vallee de L'Aa is a regular preserved railway gala weekend. Arques Station is about 5km or 3 miles from Saint Omer station. Catch the Number 3 & 6 bus to Arques Centre Ville [Place] but note there are no buses on Sundays and Public Holidays.

There is 15 km of railway up the Aa valley in the heart of the Regional Natural Park of Caps and Marais d'Opal.

Tramway touristique de l'Aisne à Érezée 60th Anniversary Event 4th & 5th July

<https://www.facebook.com/tramwaytouristiquedelaisne.erezee>

Tomorrowland

First Weekend	Wednesday 15th [AMCS] & Thursday 16th inbound [AMCS & Düss] Monday 20th outbound [AMCS & Düss]
Second Weekend	Wednesday 22nd [AMCS] & Thursday 23rd inbound [AMCS & Düss] Monday 27th outbound [AMCS & Düss]

Chemin de fer à vapeur des 3 vallées [CFV3V] - July 17th

On Friday 17th July there is a photographic event at the CFV3V.

Chemin du fer du Bocq - August 15th & 16th

The 2025 Festival is just Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th with the Photo Safari on Friday 14th. The main themes of this year's event are the renewal of the railway line and 100 years of NMBS/SNCB. Special attention will be given to the renovated Spontin station, now expanded to three tracks, as well as the track doubling works in Bauche.

They hope to be able to present a large number of NMBS/SNCB railway vehicles during the event.

I have given the Organiser some suggestions. You can be proactive or start asking questions on Facebook a month before the Gala.

Pukkelpop - Thursday 20th to Sunday 23rd August

Sometimes there are extra trains and it is always busy in the Hasselt area.

European Railtours 28th & 29th August 2026

Two days of tours based in Rotterdam with a short Friday tour and a full days tour on Saturday. RailExperts are again facilitating the tour. Booked my hotel.

I have had e-mails and questions about these tours. I have asked the Organiser when the details will be available but had no reply at the time of writing.

Stoomtrein Maldegem-Eeklo - 5508 Running day - 20th September 2026

<https://stoomtreinmaldegem.be/nl/evenementen-2026/20-september-2026-rij-mee-met-de-5508/>

De Lijn - Antwerpen PCC Tram Event - 26th September 2026

Farewell to the PCC event in Antwerpen.

Open Day at Mechelen and Salzinnes Works - Sunday 4th October 2026

Both works have an Open Day on 4th October 2026.



Belgische Nachrichten Nouvelles belges Belgisch Nieuws

Line 15 / 273

The first point has been installed for the track doubling between Balen and Neerpelt.

<https://flickr.com/photos/johnybrauns/55260435083/in/feed-42080457-1778399292-1-72157721806562926>

Ottignies Station

<https://www.rtbf.be/article/la-destruction-de-la-gare-d-ottignies-a-commence-11719062>



The demolition of Ottignies Station should last four to six weeks. This is an important milestone for Wallonia's third busiest station which sees 400 trains a day and about twenty thousand passengers pass through. Once fully demolished a new station should be ready in 2029. In the meantime, a temporary station has been installed to provide minimum passenger service.

The old building of the station of Ottignies will have remained standing for twenty seven years. Inaugurated on 30th March 1999, the demolition work of the station began on Monday, May 4 and will take a month or so.

For more views of the 1999 Station see

https://www.garesbelges.be/ottignies_2010_2026.htm

For views of the 1884 Station see

<https://www.garesbelges.be/ottignies.htm>

Spontin Station

<https://www.rtbf.be/article/la-renovation-de-la-gare-de-spontin-est-bientot-terminee-11720196>



Three tracks instead of one and a new glass roof, the renovations are important and will allow the station of Spontin to regain its appearance of yesteryear. "Here the station is now more than 100 years old and so we try to find this style of the period," explains Aimeric Romain, active as a volunteer within the association "Patrimoine Ferroviaire et Tourisme". "We have a lot of period photos, technical documents, which allowed us to redo, for example, to the millimetre, the same canopy as at the time." The objective is to improve the attractiveness of this tourist line between Yvoir and Ciney. "At the moment, we do not yet have the technical possibility to go to Yvoir. But she will go to Bauche and a little further. So it's about 16 km of tourist railway line ". And on this line, the station of Spontin is ideally located to become the visitor center for travelers. "Spontin, it's really the nerve center. Travellers can also be accommodated in Dorinne and Bauche, also in Ciney or at other small stops. But Spontin, this is really the center where all the activities happen." The work cost about 1.6 million euros, 80% financed by the Walloon region and 20% by the association. The inauguration and launch of the tourist train season is scheduled for May 24.

<https://www.garesbelges.be/spontin.htm>

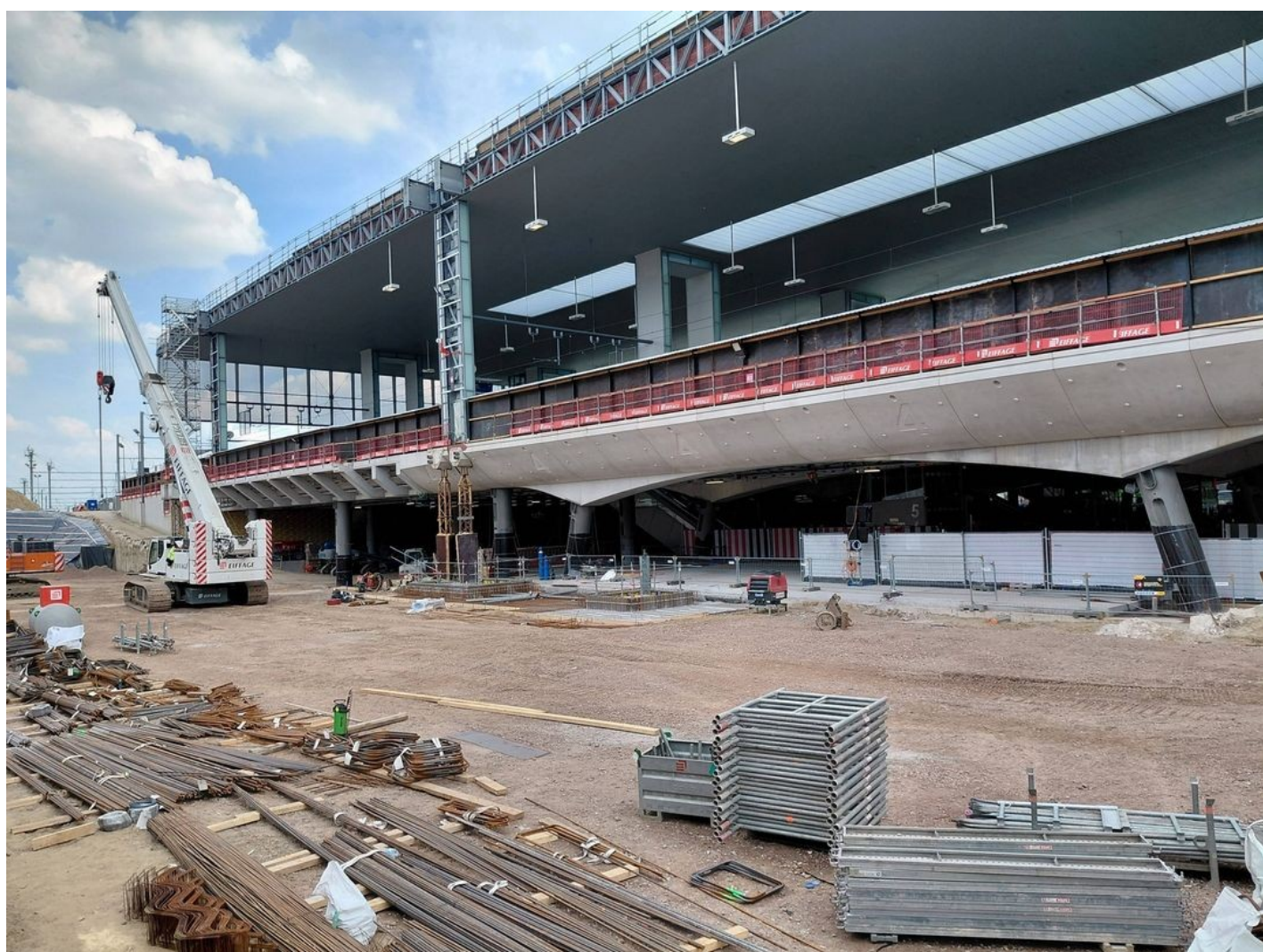
I have seen lots of photographs of what is happening at Spontin but is there any information about Bauche floating about? It was supposed to be getting a central island platform and run round line but I have seen nothing. Has anyone got any photographs or even an update on the works.

Gent St Pieters

Three photographs by Benny Moelaert and posted to *Trein en Station Vroeger en Nu* (Train et Gare d'aujourd'hui et d'autrefois). The black arches are the old main passageway into the station.



The way in from the front via the passageway from the main hall.



HLE 13

After the Revision Dates on 1313, 1319, 1323 & 1354# [# In Salzinnes Works].

1313 on repair at Antwerpen Noord after colliding with a car on the Athus Meuse Line.

1333 is at Salzinnes for repair after a collision with a truck in France on 27/02/25.

1333 has a new nose recovered from another 13 and is getting a repaint.

1354 is at Salzinnes Works, possibly for an Intermediate Revision.

HLE 18/19

Interested in the Intermediate Revision dates on

1841, 1843#, 1845#, 1847 & 1924# [# In Salzinnes Works].

Sometimes a Revision is done and then the locomotive stays in for other work to be done like the ECTS works.

Some of the "ETCS works" may be rectification or a lesser upgrade.

Some of the "ETCS works" may be revisions.

There are a lot of HLE 18s in Salzinnes, too many.

1816 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1828 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1843 is at Salzinnes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service whenever.

1845 is at Salzinnes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service in early June.

1860 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1863 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1866 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1870 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1875 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1881 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1882 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1895 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1923 is in Salzinnes for ETCS works.

1924 is at Salzinnes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service whenever.

1813 and 19807 in Braunschweig with RailAdventure.

HLE 17

RRF brought 1703 & 1704 to Zwolle on Friday 8th May 2026. The train was hauled by RRF 19 and included the two TRAXX with 12899, 12853, 12821, 12856 and 12842.

I am not expecting too many problems as the TRAXX 3 is a known entity. It is basically something that has been passed electrically already on go faster bogies. There will also be the door opening system to approve with the HLE 17s as well.



HLE 21

Huib was out in Poland last week and has reported from Bór and Sosnowiec Jęzor on 6th May 2026.

2147, 2115, 2123, 2139, 2154, 2152, 2142, 2158, 2122 & 2146 are in one line and have arrived from Jaworzno. They are in a yard near Bór at 50°14'51.1N 19°11'14.4E

2131, 2149, 2717, 2725, 2726, 2728, 2733, 2747 & 2751 are still nearby at KoL - Sosnowiec Jęzor.

There is a possibility that 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2106, 2109, 2110, 2112, 2117, 2119, 2120, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128 & 2129 have been scrapped at Szczakowa Północ Yard as we understand that some have been scrapped recently. Information is very sparse.



HLE 28/29/186

Interested in the Revision dates on 186 256, 186 348, 186 446 186 447, 186 454 & 186 492#.

186 492 is at Talbot Aachen for revision.

The following Akiem TRAXX are on Standstill Maintenance at Antwerpen Noord Depot.
186 011, 186 025, 186 028 & 186 240.

This involves periodic raising of the pantograph and checking the systems are working. There may also be some movement to ensure all it well. Last week I showed some photographs of TRAXX and Vectrons at Akiem's facility at Krefeld and that had a lot of locomotives sat around.

Brugge Alstom is "soon going to start modifying 186 208 and 235 to be fit for passenger service. They will serve as replacement locos for SNCB during the ETCS upgrade of their fleet, and will also serve for training purposes as they will be the first passenger Traxxes equipped with ETCS baseline 3." Both have worked passenger before.

186 208 was 2816 and this is one of the locomotives that has pushed off the end of the tracks inside Antwerpen Noord Depot and into the traverser pit. 2816 not get quite as far as Europorte 4006 did in 2024. 4006 made it all the way across the traverser pit and demolished the sandbins on the other side.



Photo by Peter Eizens on 29/03/22



An interesting photograph taken by Jon Piesing on 23/03/22. This is one reason why the HLE 11s were taken off the Benelux, not enough power to get up the slope out of Antwerpen Centraal.

It will be interesting to see if these two TRAXX get their 28xx numbers back.

HLR 77

- 7701 is at Salzinnes for repairs to collision damage after a shunting accident with 7705.
- 7705 is under repair at Salzinnes Works after a shunting accident with 7701.
- 7709 is in Salzinnes Works for the fitting of ETCS and repainting into Infrabel Blue.
- 7710 is in Salzinnes Works for the fitting of ETCS and repainting into Infrabel Blue.
- 7729 is in Salzinnes Works for the fitting of ETCS and repainting into Infrabel Blue.
- 7733 is back in service after ETCS fitting.
- 7758 is at Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.
- 7765 is at Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.
- 7774 is at Voith Turbo, Kiel for Revision.
- 7776 is back in service.
- 7782 is at Salzinnes for Revision.
- 7812 is at Brouwer Technologie BV Roosendaal for installation of ETCS.
- 7830 is at Brouwer Technologie BV Roosendaal for installation of ETCS.
- 7852 is at Brouwer Technologie BV Roosendaal for installation of ETCS.



• Gerd De Vos, directeur NMBS Technics.
Foto NMBS.

Laatste Alstom M7-rijtuigen stromen dit jaar in

Dit jaar levert Alstom de laatste van de 751 bestelde M7-rijtuigen aan de NMBS. Hiervan zijn 115 gemotoriseerde stuurrijtuigen en 127 gelijkvloers toegankelijke rijtuigen. Die autonome toegankelijkheid is alleen mogelijk in stations met liften en hoge perrons. De levering van de M7-dubbeldekkers liep om allerlei redenen (onder meer corona) meer dan twee jaar vertraging op. Alstom moet nog 63 dubbeldecksrijtuigen leveren. Het laatste in de loop van december.

Als de instroming van de MR30-treinen op gang komt, zullen de viertjes (1975-1977), de M5-dubbeldekkers (bouwjaar 1979-1983), de Sprinters (1986-1988) en Breaks (1980) geleidelijk uit het spoorweglandschap verdwijnen. De gemiddelde leeftijd van het rollend materieel van de NMBS zal dan rond de twintig jaar schommelen.

Final Alstom M7 carriages to be delivered this year

This year, Alstom will deliver the last of the 751 M7 carriages ordered to the NMBS/SNCB. Of these, 115 are motorised driving carriages and 127 are level-access carriages. This autonomous accessibility is only possible at stations with lifts and high platforms. The delivery of the M7 double-deckers was delayed by more than two years for various reasons (including the pandemic). Alstom still has to deliver 63 double-decker carriages. The last one is due in December.

Once the introduction of the MR30 trains gets underway, the 'fours' (1975- 1977), the M5 double-deckers (built 1979-1983), the Sprinters (1986-1988) and Breaks (1980) will gradually disappear from the railway landscape. The average age of the rolling stock of the NMBS will then hover around twenty years.

Iain's Comment - What this article has enabled me to do is finally work out the numbers of M7 Coaches that have already been delivered and will be delivered in the remained of 2026.

The original order placed in December 2015 was for 445 vehicles

M7B x 145	Built - 72001 to 72145
M7AB x 145	Built - 73001 to 73145
M7BDx x 55	Built - 75001 to 75055
M7BMx x 90	Built - 76001 to 76090
M7Bx x 10	These have not been built

In December 2020 a further 204 cars were ordered for mobility impaired people

M7BVx multifunctional x 70	Built - 75066 to 75136
M7BD multifunctional x 134	Building - 79001 to 79134
	79001 to 79081 built and accepted [81]
	79082 to 79127 to be built in 2026 [46]

In December 2021 there was a further order for 98 additional M7 vehicles.

M7B x 12	Built - 72146 to 72157
M7AB x 80	Built - 73146 to 73214 [68]
	To be built in 2026 are 73215 to 73226 [12]
M7BM x 22	Built - 76091 to 76113

Also in December 2021 there was a reduction

M7BD Multifunctional x 7	lost 79128 to 79134
M7Bx x 9	lost 75056 to 75065 [which is 10]

Since 2021

M7BMx x 1	Built - 76114 [to replace 76017]
M7BMx x 2	Built - 76115 & 76116 [extra]

As you can see on the spreadsheet, all this adds up to 751 vehicles.

To confirm 75056 to 75065 and 79128 to 79134 are not being built.

To be built at Brugge in 2026 are 73215 to 73226 and 79082 to 79127 [58].

What I cannot account for are the 63 in the above article, "Alstom still has to deliver 63 double-decker carriages". All I can think of is 58 + 75135 + 75136 + 72001 + 72002 + 72004.

At Alstom Brugge are 72006 [retrofit], 72008 [retrofit], 72060 [retrofit], 72131 [retrofit], 72144 [retrofit], 72149 [retrofit], 73005 [retrofit], 73006 [retrofit], 73111 [retrofit], 73152 [retrofit], 73005 [retrofit], 73219, 73220, 73221 and new 75136 where the onboard computer has touched base with the Mother Ship.

AR/MW 41

Marcad keeps a list of Revision Dates for the units and he has supplied this list of AR/MW Revision Dates.

White The Revision Dates Marcad has personally observed.
Yellow Revision Dates Iain has estimated.
Red Withdrawn
Orange Date of last passenger working
Order of leaving Salzannes

Between eight and fourteen will be stopped this autumn and either sold or scrapped.
Withdrawn - 4102, 4166, 4175 & 4182 [4] [4102 is heavily robbed of parts]

Not Overhauled - 4135, 4177, 4181 & 4187 [4]

Up to six more of the worst condition or longest hours ones may also be stopped.

At the same time as some overhauled ones are going to be withdrawn, 4109 is being overhauled at Salzannes!

4133 has not worked since 24/03/24 and is at Salzannes.

#1	4133	03/07/15	#36	4191	03/11/20	#71	4105	04/09/24
#2	4101	08/04/16	#37	4121	26/01/21	#72	4145	30/09/24
#3	4127	23/05/16	#38	4194	02/03/21	#73	4106	31/10/24
#4	4139	27/09/16	#39	4111	09/04/21	#74	4164	19/12/24
#5	4132	21/12/16	#40	4119	18/05/21	#75	4154	22/01/25
#6	4134	24/02/17	#41	4184	25/06/21	#76	4159	26/03/25
#7	4137	17/05/17	#42	4142	04/08/21	#77	4158	28/03/25
#8	4130	16/06/17	#43	4192	08/09/21	#78	4160	17/06/25
#9	4136	07/09/17	#44	4152	15/10/21	#79	4188	23/09/25
#10	4108	27/10/17	#45	4185	17/11/21	#75	4154	22/01/25
#11	4140	30/11/17	#46	4110	24/12/21	#76	4159	26/03/25
#12	4161	19/01/18	#47	4156	27/01/22	#77	4158	28/03/25
#13	4138	02/03/18	#48	4196	04/03/22	#78	4160	17/06/25
#14	4141	13/04/18	#49	4148	08/04/22	#79	4188	23/09/25
#15	4124	30/05/18	#50	4179	12/05/22	#80	4169	18/12/25
#16	4162	12/07/18	#51	4114	17/06/22	#81	4103	27/02/26
#17	4174	10/09/18	#52	4146	01/08/22	#82	4123	24/04/26
#18	4171	19/10/18	#53	4107	09/09/22	#83	4167	11/06/26
#19	4180	29/11/18	#54	4190	06/10/22	#84	4195	29/07/26
#20	4178	25/01/19	#55	4153	07/12/22	#85	4168	05/11/26
#21	4173	04/03/19	#56	4151	12/01/23	#86	4109	24/09/26
#22	4170	29/03/19	#57	4116	07/02/23			
#23	4193	20/05/19	#58	4120	15/03/23		4135	30/04/26
#24	4189	21/06/19	#59	4126	21/04/23		4177	08/05/26
#25	4172	25/07/19	#60	4186	26/05/23		4181	08/05/26
#26	4163	03/09/19	#61	4155	29/06/23		4187	08/05/26
#27	4122	11/10/19	#62	4104	24/08/23			
#28	4129	20/11/19	#63	4128	29/09/23	Wdn	4102	06/10/25
#29	4118	20/01/20	#64	4147	26/10/23	Wdn	4117	Cut Up
#30	4157	17/02/20	#65	4112	27/11/23	Wdn	4131	Cut Up
#31	4183	08/04/20	#66	4165	26/01/24	Wdn	4166	06/10/25
#32	4176	29/05/20	#67	4143	01/03/24	Wdn	4175	06/10/25
#33	4115	03/07/20	#68	4149	08/05/24	Wdn	4182	06/10/25
#34	4113	28/08/20	#69	4150	21/06/24			
#35	4125	08/10/20	#70	4144	18/07/24			

4137... no date on it. 4106 has not a full date.

4154 has the wrong year in the RG date = 22-01-24 (note also on it : PUH 20 FAZ 11/24)

From the NMBS/SNCB Staff Magazine. For those listening at home in the UK an English translation is below!

HERMAN WELTER TEXT & PHOTOS



• Een artistieke impressie van de MR30-trein. Het ontwerp is nog niet definitief. Van het interieur zijn nog geen beelden beschikbaar. Illustratie NMBS.

“Als alles volgens plan verloopt, zullen we de eerste CAF-treinen in het najaar van 2030 in de reizigersdienst kunnen inzetten. Door de klachten van Alstom en Siemens bij de Raad van State hebben we acht tot negen maanden verloren. Jammer, want op ons huiswerk was niets aan te merken”, zegt directeur Technics Gerd De Vos, verantwoordelijk voor de strategie, aankoop en onderhoud van het rollend materieel van de NMBS.

De 180 bij het Baskische CAF (Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles) bestelde drierijtuigtreinen zijn gebaseerd op het Civity-platform. Ze worden in drie varianten geleverd:

- 136 treinen met hoge capaciteit (300 zitplaatsen waarvan 45 eerste klas) voor intercityverbindingen;
- 20 treinen met hoge capaciteit (324 zitjes waarvan 32 in eerste klas) voor voorstads- en lokale trajecten;
- 24 batterijtreinen met lagere capaciteit: 280 zitjes waarvan 28 in eerste klas.

De 156 treinen met hoge capaciteit bestaan uit twee enkeldeksrijtuigen met in het midden een dubbeldekker.

Enkele kenmerken van de MR30

- Techniek

- Aluminium rijtuigkasten
- Luchtgekoelde asynchrone motoren
- Acht aangedreven assen (vier in elk koprijtuig)
- Geschikt voor uitsluitend 3000 Volt gelijkspanning
- Maximale snelheid 160 km/u; batterijtreinen 120 km/u op niet-geëlektrificeerde trajecten
- Automatische koppelingen van het Zwitserse Georg Fischer (GF); een MR30 kan eventueel een defecte Break, Sprinter of M7-trein wegslepen.

In theorie kunnen vier MR30'en tot één trein worden gekoppeld

- Comfort

- Gelijkvloers in- en uitstappen vanaf een hoog perron
- Gelaserde ruiten voor optimale ontvangst mobiele telefoon
- Bij elke twee stoelen komt er naast een stopcontact een usbc-poort
- Twee rolstoelplaatsen
- Acht fietsplaatsen
- Infoschermen zoals in de M7-rijtuigen
- Stiltezone
- 1 WC, ook toegankelijk voor personen met beperkte mobiliteit

Batterijtreinen voor laatste dieseltrajecten

De vierentwintig batterijtreinen zijn bestemd voor de nog resterende dieseltrajecten Gent-Geraardsbergen, Gent-Eeklo, Gent-Oudenaarde-Ronse en Charleroi-Couvin. Een beperkt deel van die trajecten loopt onder draad maar onvoldoende voor het laden van de batterijen. Daarom installeert Infrabel in de stations Eeklo, Ronse en Couvin een stukje bovenleiding zodat op deze eindpunten de batterijen kunnen worden geladen.

“De NMBS wil met de batterijtreinen naar Aken en Rijsel rijden maar dan moeten beide grenstrajecten wel met ETCS worden beveiligd. Hier zijn we afhankelijk van de Duitsers en Fransen”, licht De Vos toe.



“Eerste CAF-treinen in najaar 2030 in dienst”

An artistic impression of the MR30 train. The design is not yet final. No images of the interior are available yet. Illustration NMBS.

HERMAN WELTER TEXT & PHOTOS

“If everything goes according to plan, we will be able to deploy the first CAF trains in passenger service in the autumn of 2030. Due to the complaints from Alstom and Siemens at the Council of State, we have lost eight to nine months. It’s a pity because there was nothing wrong with our homework,” says Technics Director Gerd De Vos, responsible for the strategy, procurement, and maintenance of the rolling stock of NMBS/SNCB.

The 180 three-car trains ordered from the Basque CAF (Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles) are based on the Civity platform. They will be delivered in three variants:

136 high-capacity trains (300 seats of which 45 first class) for intercity connections;

20 high-capacity trains (324 seats of which 32 in first class) for suburban and local routes;

The 156 high-capacity trains consist of two single-deck carriages with a double-decker in the middle.

24 battery trains with lower capacity: 280 seats of which 28 in first class.

Some features of the MR30

Aluminium bodies.

Air-cooled asynchronous motors.

Eight driven axles (four in each driving carriage).

Suitable for exclusively 3000 Volt direct current.

Maximum speed 160 km/h; battery trains 120 km/h on non-electrified routes.

Automatic couplings from the Swiss Georg Fischer (GF); an MR30 can potentially tow a defective Break, Sprinter, or M7 train.

Iain's Comment - I always wondered what GF stood for!

In theory, four MR30s can be coupled into one train.

Comfort

Level boarding and alighting from a high platform.

Lasered windows for optimal mobile phone reception.

Next to every two seats, there is a power outlet and a USB-C port.

Two wheelchair spaces.

Eight bicycle spaces.

Information screens like in the M7 carriages.

Quiet zone.

Battery trains for the last diesel routes.

1 WC, also accessible for persons with limited mobility. **Iain's Comment** - It is a bit of an oxymoron to list one toilet for a three car set under comfort. There should be at least two toilets per train, a disabled one and a standard one.

The twenty-four battery trains are intended for the remaining diesel routes Gent-Geraardsbergen, Gent-Eeklo, Gent-Oudenaarde-Ronse, and Charleroi-Couvin. A limited part of those routes runs under overhead wire but is insufficient for charging the batteries. Therefore Infrabel is installing a piece of overhead line at Eeklo, Ronse, and Couvin stations so that the batteries can be charged at these endpoints. "The NMBS wants to operate the battery trains to Aachen and Lille, but then both border routes must be secured with ETCS. Here we are dependent on the Germans and French," explains De Vos.

Iain's Comment - There is also the Aalst to Burst service. I do think that not electrifying the lines around Gent is a mistake. Battery to Eeklo is OK with all the lifting bridges. But some of the others should be simple fill in jobs especially as the complicated bits have been done that the lines link to. Line 122 should be fully electrified along with Line 82 and Line 86 between De Pinte and Oudenaarde.

Back when the AR/MW 41 fleet was fully utilised in 2015 Charleroi needed 20 units to run the Couvin service. Melle needed 47 AR/MW 41s to run their services around Gent. Twenty four battery units is not enough to run Couvin and Gent let alone all the other routes unless NMBS/SNCB buy more. Unless NMBS/SNCB are intending to run these routes on a shoe string with the absolute minimum number of units. Even then there is not enough battery units.

Roosendaal

Naar Roosendaal zal de MR30 met half vermogen onder de Nederlandse 1,5 KV-gelijkspanning rijden. Zoals dat al decennia het geval is met locomotieven en motorrijtuigen. Maar ook hier geldt dat het traject naar Roosendaal met ETCS moet worden uitgerust. Of met ATB maar dat is niet toekomstgericht. De onverwoestbare maar niet altijd fris ogende viertjes zullen nog jaren een vertrouwd beeld zijn in het grensstation Roosendaal.

De batterijtreinen zijn enkeledeks. Op niet-geëlektrificeerde baanvakken bedraagt de maximale snelheid 120 km/u. Voor het batterijvermogen baseert de NMBS zich op de verbinding Charleroi-Couvin, het langste en tevens hellingrijke dieseltaject.



Roosendaal

The MR30 will run to Roosendaal at half power under the Dutch 1.5 DC voltage. As has been the case for decades with locomotives and motor coaches. But here too, the route to Roosendaal must be equipped with ETCS. Or with ATB, but that is not future-proof. The indestructible but not always fresh-looking four-car trains will remain a familiar sight for years to come at the border station of Roosendaal.

The battery trains are single-deck. On non-electrified sections, the maximum speed is 120 km/h. For the battery capacity, the NMBS bases its calculations on the Charleroi - Couvin line, the longest and also the most hilly diesel route.

Iain's Comment - A very strange thing to do is illustrate a piece about AM/MS 30 going to Roosendaal with a photograph of some M7s at Aarschot! This photo of the M7s is by Bart Van Tricht who is a top man.

Extending the line from Hamont to Weert is still on the cards. A bridge needs to be built at Weert to take the trains over the canal. However running on battery for the eleven kilometres from the border to Weert and back will save on the extortionate amount of money the Dutch wanted to charge to electrify the line. It was not so much stringing the wires up, it was all the works around that. If the trains are battery powered then the overhead power cables may be able to go in the bin.

There is quite a few trains run from Antwerpen Docks to the Nyrstar Budel Zinc smelter at Budel. For most of the distance these heavy trains run under the wires. Extending the electrification over the border and electrifying the branch would be an option. Use an electric locomotive with a last mile diesel engine for the short parts at each end.

100 jaar NMBS / 100 ans SNCB patrimoine historique

This is a post by Michael Walschot and posted to NMBS Historisch / SNCB patrimoine group on Facebook.

I am not going to vouch for the accuracy of the information here. The order in which the items are listed is different. If you think there is anything wrong then e-mail me.

I have spotted that 5910 is at Salzannes at the moment. I am assuming it is then for final works to enable it to come back into service. Due off works at the end of June 2026 and so has to be a prime candidate for this summers festival circuit.

6306 is being worked on at Melle, I assume as a fill in job. Due off in early August but I would not hold my breath that this date is stuck to. Unless.....

- 29.013 (Montreal,1946) - Mise hors service en 2019 / Buiten dienst sedert 2019
- 5166 (Cockerill,1963) - Operationelle, mais sans systeme de securite moderne (ETCS) - Rijvaardig, maar zonder modern veiligheidssysteem (ETCS)
- 5404 (Anglo Franco Belge, 1957) - Operationelle, mais sans ETCS - Rijvaardig, maar zonder ETCS
- 5512 (La brugeoise et Nivelles, 1962) - Operationelle - Rijvaardig
- 5910 (Cockerill,1955) - Hors service / Buiten dienst [at Salzannes being worked on]
- 6041 (Cockerill,1964) - Rijvaardig, zonder ETCS / Operationelle, sans ETCS
- 660 (Ateliers Belges Reunis, 1971) - Rijvaardig, zonder ETCS / Operationelle, sans ETCS
- 600 (La Brugeoise et Nivelles, 1970) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 039 (Energie,1953) - Hors Service / Buiten dienst
- 002 (Nivelles,1939) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 2711 (BN/ACEC, 1982) - Rijvaardig, zonder ETCS / Operationelle, sans ETCS
- 2383 (BN Nivelles, 1957) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 2160 (BN/ACEC, 1987) - Rijvaardig, zonder ETCS / Operationelle, sans ETCS
- 2001 (BN/ACEC, 1975) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 1602 (BN/ACEC, 1966) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 1187 (BN/ACEC, 1986) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 6306 (BN, 1966) - Hors service / Buiten dienst [this is being worked on at Melle]
- 5917 (Cockerill,1955) - Pour pieces / Onderdelen
- 5142 (Cockerill,1962) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 1152 (Anglo Franco Belge,1880) - Statique / Statisch
- 10.018 (Cockerill,1913) - Statique / Statis
- 12.004 (Cockerill,1939) - Statique / Statis
- 18.051 (St Leonard,1905) - Statique / Statis
- 6406 (Enghien, 1962) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 1503 (BN/ACEC, 1962) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 1.002 (Cockerill,1935) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 16.042 (Tubize,1909) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 5620 (Ateliers de Construction de Boussu,1906) - Hors service / Buiten dienst
- 64.045 (Allemagne,1916) - Hors service / Buiten dienst

Maarten's Tramblette

De PCC-trams waren jarenlang een vertrouwd beeld in Antwerpen, maar aan alles komt een einde.... Op donderdag 30 april 2026 reden de PCC's hun vermoedelijk laatste reguliere rit en een week later werd er voor een zeer kleine groep een afscheids line up georganiseerd in de stelplaats van Hoboken.

Als alles meezit komt er nog een groot afscheidsfeest voor de PCC's op zaterdag 26 september 2026 in Antwerpen.

Met dank aan iedereen die dit mede heeft mogelijk gemaakt!

The PCC trams were a familiar sight in Antwerpen for years, but everything comes to an end.... On Thursday, April 30, 2026, the PCC's were supposedly their last regular ride and a week later a farewell line up was organized for a very small group at Hoboken depot.

If everything goes well, there will be another big farewell party for the PCCs on Saturday, September 26, 2026 in Antwerpen.

Thanks to everyone who made this possible!



Words and photograph by Maarten Schrouben

Iain's Comment - There is going to have to be some use of the PCC cars to keep them serviceable. This might just be a run out empty every week or so or perhaps a few peak hour turns. As much as we enthusiasts like them, the PCCs are not very good for mobility impaired people and things like mums with buggies etc.

CFL Norichten aus Lëtzebuerg

CFL 188

This is what you are up against, nice photograph of one of the new Class 188s but the photographer did not note the number.....



The photograph is king, sometimes to the point of stupidity.

CFL DOSTO

Some more CFL DOSTO stock is moving to DSB. These two photographs were taken in Ehrang and with 186 127 being in the photograph, it is not Luxembourg.
Photograph by Jörg Schlexer and posted to Lëtzebuurger Eisebunn, Tram an Bus Frënn.





DM 90

<https://www.rynek-kolejowy.pl/wiadomosci/pierwszy-dm90-skpl-juz-w-barwach-pkp-intercity-152733.html>

Written by Jacob Rösler at Rynek Kolejowy and translated.

We were able to photograph the first DM90 unit painted in PKP Intercity colours. Let us remind you that the carrier rents a minimum of 22 such vehicles from SKPL and runs them on side, combustion routes - m.in. to Gorzów Wielkopolski or Jelenia Góra.

PKP Intercity rents used, combustion traction units to operate routes without a traction network from SKPL Cargo, which bought a lot of DM90 units in the Netherlands and Romania. Total Such used vehicles will be 46, of which up to 32 are to go to PKP Intercity.

Already today, Intercity is using 14 vehicles, and by the end of June this number would increase to 22 units. Trains are used by the carrier to develop the offer on routes without a traction network and for courses to such cities as Jelenia Góra, Gorzów Wielkopolski, or Soon Łomża, where after more than 30 years the railway is to return, which will take place in mid-June this year.

Intercity wants to rent 32 vehicles and plans to paint them all in their colors - the units running so far have SKPL colors with the inscription PKP Intercity.

Now, however, we saw the first, not yet ready yet, DM90 vehicle painted in Intercity colors, which we managed to catch at the station in Zagórze. As you can see in the pictures, the unit does not yet have the marking and vehicle number and has not yet been covered in PKP Intercity inscriptions. So she is probably waiting for the final work before sending to the carrier.

So far, we do not know when the vehicle we have noticed will go to PKP Intercity and when and where it will debut on the route, but probably it is no longer a distant future - in this matter we are waiting for answers from the company.

Iain's Comment - This unit is 3448.

ICNG

3119's first test run was on Tuesday 5th May 2026.



3116's first test run was on Wednesday 6th May 2026.



Both photographs by Mark Broekhans and posted to the ICNG Group on Facebook.



Belgian Can Can

45 / 144



This photograph was taken by Glos Old Spot on 19th April 2018. It shows 2121 at Keyser & Fils at Courcelles two years after it had been marked down as being scrapped. Also still there on this date were 7367 and 7368 perhaps being saved for a Wallonian version of Dai Woodham or more likely a rainy day. Keyser & Fils is no longer rail connected.

2121 was parked up deep inside the yard in a place that is not visible from the outside. A look on Google Earth showed the locomotives were visible from the air, but only if you knew where to look. Why would anyone be looking at Keyser's Yard for a locomotive that was cut up two years ago?

Many, many thanks to Glos Old Spot for both taking time out to visit and for allowing his photos to be put in the Ramble. I did ask why he had gone to the yard when there was little of railway interest.

His reply was "I went to Keyser's because I like to go to out of the way places and something a bit different, especially when I have a hire car. When I went there last year it was closed but I could see 7368 over the wall and what looked like a scrap coach or possibly a coach from a brake unit. I had hoped to identify whatever it was on this visit,

but unfortunately it had gone and been scrapped. I suppose that's what they do in scrap yards!

It was only by chance that as I walked down to 7368 that something blue caught my eye and I went off to investigate. Hey presto 2121 and 7367.

That's what makes this hobby so enjoyable, unless you use RTT or treinradar, you never know what you are going to see.

I should just mention that there is an orange/white Cockerill 0-4-0D in there too, works number 3827 of 1961, but that has been there for years and doesn't look like it is destined for the chop anytime soon."

Blast From The Past



Another one from Rob Dale. This time it is the turn of 2249 which at the time was employed as a Liège Banker. Everything in this scene was gone except the bow string bridge in the background and the I11 Driving Trailer.

2249 was withdrawn on 13/07/07 and cut at Luxfur, Aubange in December 2009.



Other News

Birmingham Canal Side

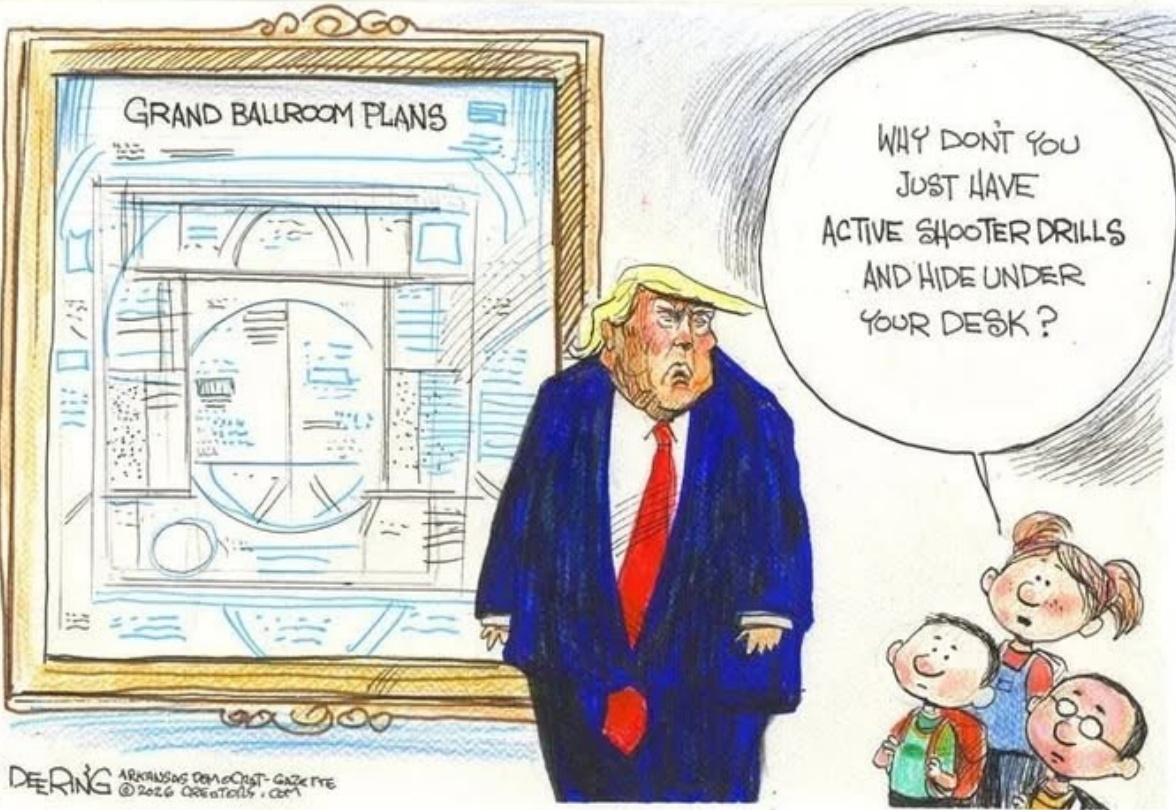
Apparently, Birmingham has more canals than Venezia.





Charles is now a King, the Oval Office is now tacky, the President is still a crook

THE DAVID
PAKMAN
SHOW



My son is taking part in a social experiment. He has to wear a MAGA hat and see how people react. So far he's been spit on, punched and had a bottle thrown at him! I'm curious to see what happens when he goes outside.

Every Friday!



"The upholstery is shoddy, there's no lumbar support and the seat depth is way too low..."



"Sorry about Frank, he's a real armchair critic"



The scales sometimes do this to me or protest "only one at once!"



Have a nice week and I will see you again on 25th May!

Tain